DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 055 543 HE 002 579

TITLE Top-Quarter Seniors in Virginia Public High Schools; Part I: Post High School Plans by Sex and Type of High School.
INSTITUTION Virginia Univ., Charlottesville. Office of Institutional Analysis.
REPORT NO OIA-7172-184
PUB DATE 30 Jul 71
NOTE 8p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS Able Students; *College Bound Students; *High School Students; *Planning; *Seniors; *Surveys
IDENTIFIERS *Virginia

ABSTRACT

This report presents information on the post-high school plans of 13,049 seniors in public high schools of Virginia in May 1970 who were in the top quarter of their class and responded to a survey made by the Research Division of the Virginia State Department of Education. Table 1 presents information of the seniors by sex, type of high school attended (rural or urban), and by type of activity planned after high school: attendance at a 4-year college, attendance at a 2-year college as a terminal program, and no plans to enter college. The second table presents information by sex on the reasons why 1,129 of these students were not continuing their education beyond high school and compares this with similar information provided by 1956 top-quarter seniors. (AF)

ED055543

TOP-QUARTER SENIORS IN VIRGINIA PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS

SPRING, 1970

PART I: POST HIGH SCHOOL PLANS BY SEX AND TYPE OF HIGH SCHOOL

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

HE 002-579

Office of Institutional Analysis

July 30, 1971 OIA-7172-184

POST-HIGH SCHOOL PLANS OF TOP-QUARTER VIRGINIA PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS
SPRING, 1970

In May of 1970 the Research Division of the Virginia State Department of Education obtained a considerable amount of information in its "Senior Survey" about the seniors then enrolled in the high schools of the State. Permission was granted by this Division to the Office of Institutional Analysis at the University of Virginia to include in the analysis reported here, selected items of the information collected for a portion of the seniors. Specifically, the population included in this report includes the seniors enrolled in the public high schools of Virginia in May of 1970 who ranked in the top-quarter of their senior classes. The information reported relates to their plans beyond high school. There were 13,049 of these top-quarter seniors in the public high schools who responded in the Senior Survey.

Table 1 contains distributions of these top-quarter seniors by sex, by type of high school attended, and by type of activity planned beyond high school. The following observations are derived from the data in Table 1.

1. Among the 13,049 top-quarter seniors there were 4,552 (35%) boys and 8,497 (65%) girls.
2. The number of top-quarter seniors enrolled in rural (R) high schools was 4,436 (34%); the number in urban (U) high schools was 8,613 (66%).
3. Eighty-two per cent of these top-quarter seniors planned to enter college, leaving 18 per cent who did not plan to enter college.
4. Of the 4,552 top-quarter male seniors, 4,193 (92%) intended to go to college, while 6,518 (77%) of the top-quarter girls intended to go to college. Moreover, 83 per cent of the top-quarter boys and 67 per cent of the top-quarter girls intended to go to a four-year college or university.

5. A relatively small number, 674 (5%), of these top-quarter seniors intended to go to a two-year college and later transfer to a four-year institution.
6. A significantly smaller per cent (73%) of the top-quarter seniors enrolled in rural high schools intended to go to college than was true of those enrolled in urban high schools (87%).

An earlier study of the post-high school plans of seniors in Virginia white public high schools was done by Bryant[1]. His study accumulated data on 3,781 top-quarter white seniors in the spring of 1956. Some of his findings on these top-quarter white seniors follow.

1. Among the 3,781 top-quarter seniors, 1,176 (31%) were boys and 2,605 (69%) were girls.
2. Of the 1,176 top-quarter male students, 972 (83%) planned to enter college while 1,653 (63%) top-quarter girls planned to enter college.
3. The number of top-quarter seniors enrolled in county schools was 2,665 (70%); the number in city schools was 1,116 (30%).
4. Sixty-nine per cent of the top-quarter seniors planned to enter college, leaving 31 per cent who did not plan to enter college.

Rank in senior class is generally regarded as a highly significant index of academic potential. It is reasonable to assume that those who rank in the top-quarter of their senior classes represent, as a group, those most likely to succeed in college. Moreover, it may be regarded as undeveloped talent

---

[1]M. Howard Bryant. "Factors Affecting the Decision of Top-Quarter Virginia High School Graduates Not to Go to College." Doctoral Dissertation, University of Virginia, 1957.

when these students do not plan to continue their education in college. Consequently, it is encouraging that the per cent of top-quarter seniors planning to go to colleges has increased from 69% in 1956 to 82% in 1970. This is even more significant when it is recalled that the 1956 per cent related to white students only, while the 1970 per cent applies to students of all races.

In Bryant's 1956 study no comparison was made between top-quarter seniors planning to enter 2-year colleges and those planning to enter 4-year colleges or universities. At that time fewer 2 year colleges existed in the State than there are now. By 1970, for example, several new community colleges had been established. It seems clear from the 1956 and 1970 data that the per cent of top-quarter seniors planning to enter 4-year institutions increased substantially between 1956 and 1970 and that about the same increase in per cent planning to enter 2-year colleges took place. This does not hold true if one considers all seniors in the 1970 Senior Survey. A similar senior survey in 1963 showed that 36 per cent of all seniors planned to attend a 4-year college or university while 11 per cent planned to attend a 2-year college. In 1970, the comparable per cents were 37 and 21, respectively. Thus it appears that 2-year colleges have increased their attractiveness to seniors-for all ranks combined-more rapidly than have the 4-year colleges and universities. It appears that 4-year institutions have increased their attractiveness to top-quarter seniors about as much as have 2-year colleges, but much less than have 2-year colleges to students in the lower ranks of their high school classes.

TABLE 1

SENIORS - VIRGINIA PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS - SPRING, 1970

In Top-Quarter of Their Senior Classes
By: Sex, Type of High School,
and Plans Beyond High School

Plans Beyond High School	Type High School	Boys	Girls	Total
Attend 4-Year College	R	959	1,590	2,549
	U	2,812	4,113	6,925
	Total	3,771	5,703	9,474
Attend 2-Year College and Transfer to 4-Year College	R	180	188	368
	U	117	189	306
	Total	297	377	674
Attend 2-Year College in Terminal Program	R	78	236	314
	U	47	202	249
	Total	125	438	563
All Top-Quarter Seniors Planning To Enter College	R	1,217	2,014	3,231
	U	2,976	4,504	7,480
	Total	4,193	6,518	10,711
No Plans to Enter College	R	192	1,013	1,205
	U	167	966	1,133
	Total	359	1,979	2,338
All Top-Quarter Seniors	R	1,409	3,027	4,436
	U	3,143	5,470	8,613
	Total	4,552	8,497	13,049

R= Rural
U= Urban

REASONS FOR NOT CONTINUING EDUCATION BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL

There were 2,338 top-quarter seniors who had no plans to enter college after high school. Of this number there were 1,129 who planned further education beyond high school without enrolling in a college. This left 1,219 who had no plans for any continuation of education beyond high schools. In the Senior Survey of May, 1970, the students in this latter group were asked to cite their reasons for not planning further education. Their replies are distributed among five reasons in Table 2.

Bryant, in his 1956 study, also ascertained reasons given by top-quarter seniors for not planning to go to college. His findings are quoted here in Table 3. It should be noted that Bryant's data included both those students planning further education beyond high school-without going to college-and those who planned no further education. This means that the data in Tables 2 and 3 are only roughly comparable. It seems worth observing, however, that a considerably higher per cent of the 1970 group in Table 2 had no interest in further education than was true of the 1956 group who lacked motivation for college attendance.

TABLE 2

REASONS GIVEN BY 1,219 TOP-QUARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL SENIORS IN 1970 FOR NOT CONTINUING EDUCATION BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL

Reasons	Boys	Girls	Total
Can't Afford	18	75	93
Grades Not Good Enough	1	7	8
Work Planned Does Not Require More Education	47	420	467
Need to Earn Money Now	42	223	265
Not Interested	83	303	386
Grand Total	191	1,028	1,219

TABLE 3

REASONS INDICATED BY TOP-QUARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL SENIORS IN 1956 FOR NOT PLANNING TO GO TO COLLEGE[2]

Reasons For Not Planning To Go To College	Boys	Girls	Total
Lack of Finances	87	286	373
Lack of Motivation	47	212	259
Not Required For Field of Interest	18	144	162
Marriage	1	144	145
Undecided As To Reason	30	63	93
Prefer To Take Post-High School Vocational Course	4	88	92
Fear of Failure in College	4	11	15
Military Service	11	-	11
Grand Total	202	948	1,150

[2]Bryant, M. H. Ibid p. 76.